

to other adults outside the home, and other children in the nursery school group, are never quite so intense or so ambivalent as to the actual parents and brothers and sisters at home. It is indeed a not uncommon experience to find the contrast quite marked. There are some children who are much easier to handle by any other adult than by the actual mother, and it is an interesting psychological question as to why this should be so. The skill and experience of the trained nursery school teacher must, of course, count for a good deal, as against the mother of an only child who has had no other experience of handling children. But this cannot be the sole factor, since the contrast often occurs even with mothers who are wise and experienced, and as against an adult (e.g. an inexperienced aunt) who is not so skilful and wise as she. By no means all nursery school teachers are wiser than the children's mothers !

There must, therefore, in these cases have been something inherent in the child's relation to his mother which made things more difficult there than with another person. Two factors at least may well operate : (a) The child has been dependent upon his mother for essential physical satisfactions, and has suffered his first thwartings from her. She is the *fans et origo* of his first real anxieties, and this remains a permanent factor, even if repressed and unconscious, in his relation with her. If his primary ambivalence, expressed in actual behaviour towards his mother (screaming, biting, wetting, etc., with all the associated phantasies), has been very intense, there is at any later time a heritage of actual and specific memory which does not operate in relation to other adults. (The same will, of course, be true in a

lesser degree of the child's real relation to his nurse.) With any newly met adult, these memories of real behaviour are not present, and he starts afresh at the level of development he has now reached. He has not bitten or dirtied or screamed at the nursery school teacher, and so he is less afraid of her. He may have no *real* reason to be afraid of his ^mother on these grounds, but his feelings are stronger than his knowledge of her real character. It is this psychological situation which accounts for some of those striking instances of children who behave so much better at school than in the home, as well as for the less marked differences shown by many ordinary